thousand more prisoners on that account. The French want four thousand; I offered to split the difference, and informed Sir S. of the plan. He wrote to entreat I would give the four thousand at once, and he would pledge himself to retake them all *in a week* after he could get out to seal

February 26th, 1797.

At last I have received your solution of the Justinian riddle, which I should never have guessed. The task you impose upon me is a very difficult one indeed. I almost despair. I do not think it will be possible to extract one brass farthing, and I know of no means of attack with any prospect of success.[1] But I may be mistaken.

The account of your illness, though all danger was past when the letter came, distressed me so much that, except the business absolutely required by my official duties, I have not been able to

[1] The ex-Bishop de Coutances, being in great poverty

in England, wished his sister to be applied to to send him money.